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SUMMARY

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DEHYDRATION OF FOODSTUFFS IN COUNTRIES OF THE TROPICAL ZONE (AFRICA)

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and Food-producing Industries

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DEHYDRATION OF FOODSTUFFS IN COUNTRIES OF THE TROPICAL ZONE

By
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Dehydration as a method of preservation is first defined and located amongst the other methods of preservation of perishable foodstuffs.

Then attention is drawn to the advantages which this method can offer in the case of countries in the dry tropical zone:

- the climate, by virtue of its usually low hygrometric factor, lends itself naturally to the application of the method; on the other hand the high temperature does not favour employment of the current method of preservation of fresh foodstuffs by refrigeration.

- the great transport distances involved, and inadequate stocking facilities, favour the use of products of reduced volume.

- the use of dehydrated foodstuffs is well adapted to the traditional equipment of the local consumer.

There follows a brief summary of the methods and apparatus of dehydration with their respective principal advantages and disadvantages. The processes are divided into four categories:

- those in which heat is used, either directly or through the medium of air or a gas.

- those in which the action of heat is added to that of a vacuum;

- those in which the action of dry air is used

- those in which dehydration is combined with the action of cold.

A choice must be made between these processes in the light of the particular conditions obtaining in these countries; namely:

- production of power difficult;

- skilled labour rare, but availability, outside periods of cultivation, of a large rural labour force;

- necessity for rapid dehydration to ensure adequate preservation of the product;

- outlets for goods thus produced in usually restricted markets;

- competition in the case of certain imported goods.

Real progress can be made in the preparation of foodstuffs to be dehydrated and especially in conditioning with a view to their preservation.

The field of application of dehydration, already practised in countries of the dry tropical zone, should be capable of considerable extension in the light of the favourable conditions obtaining there.

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